

By: Ellis

S.B. No. 1704

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to jury service.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 61.001(a), Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 61.001. (a) Each grand juror or petit juror in a civil or criminal case in a district court, criminal district court, county court, county court at law, or justice court is entitled to receive as reimbursement for travel and other expenses an amount not less than \$40 [~~6 nor more than \$50~~] for each day or fraction of each day served as a juror.

SECTION 2. Section 62.0141, Government Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 62.0141. FAILURE TO ANSWER JURY SUMMONS. In addition to any criminal penalty prescribed by law, a person summoned for jury service who does not comply with the summons as required by law or who knowingly provides false information in a request for an exemption or to be excused from jury service is subject to a contempt action punishable by a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$1,000.

SECTION 3. Subchapter A, Chapter 62, Government Code, is amended by adding Section 62.0142 to read as follows:

Sec. 62.0142. POSTPONEMENT OF JURY SERVICE. (a) A person summoned for jury service may request a postponement of the

1 person's initial appearance for jury service. The person may
2 request the postponement by contacting the clerk of the court in
3 person, in writing, or by telephone before the date on which the
4 person is summoned to appear.

5 (b) On receipt of a request under Subsection (a), the clerk
6 of the court shall grant the person a postponement if:

7 (1) the person has not been granted a postponement in
8 that county during the one-year period preceding the date on which
9 the person is summoned to appear; and

10 (2) the person and the clerk determine a substitute
11 date on which the person will appear for jury service that is not
12 later than six months after the date on which the person was
13 originally summoned to appear.

14 (c) A person who receives a postponement under Subsection
15 (b) may request a subsequent postponement in the manner described
16 by Subsection (a). The clerk of the court may approve the
17 subsequent postponement only because of an extreme emergency that
18 could not have been anticipated, such as a death in the person's
19 family, sudden serious illness suffered by the person, or a natural
20 disaster or national emergency in which the person is personally
21 involved. Before the clerk may grant the subsequent postponement,
22 the person and the clerk must determine a substitute date on which
23 the person will appear for jury service that is not later than six
24 months after the date on which the person was to appear after the
25 postponement under Subsection (b).

26 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.